### **SOLANO HISTORIAN**





### Solano Historian

The Solano Historian is published twice yearly at Vallejo, California, by the Solano County Historical Society.

Edited by

### Matthew and Lee Fountain and Robert Allgood.

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The purpose of the Solano Historian is to stimulate the enjoyment and preservation of history by publishing pictures, stories, articles, and letters furnished by its readers. Much valuable material that would flesh out our knowledge of the past is lost each year because those who might save it either do not realize its value or lack the motivation to take any immediate action. The Solano Historian will supply the motivation by showing there is an appreciative audience for such material and that people are intensely interested in items relating to their own background, that jog their memory, remind them of memorable events, and satisfy their curosity.

Readers who furnish material for publication will find they are amply rewarded by their own feeling of satisfaction and the recognition earned by their contribution.

The Solano Historian is now soliciting material of Solano and North Bay interest for future issues. More details concerning this may be obtained by contacting President Mary Higham or Lee Fountain. Comments on this issue are also welcome.

The Society does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of statements or opinions of contributions although every effort is made to be historically correct.

Solano County Historical Society P. O. Box 922, Vallejo, CA 94590



### **Dear Members:**

One again we have accomplished what we set out to do — give to our members stories of historical events that will be preserved in printed form:

The publication of the second Solano Historian was made possible by your generous support. The first issue brought 134 new members to our Society making it financially feasible to continue to publish. We have listened with pride to people who expressed their interest in a favorite story which at times brought back special memories. . . and suddenly a new story was born! We have listened with pride to many compliments on format, accuracy, and the general appearance of our publication. Yes, we are very proud. Thank you all!

All told, this had been a productive and eventful year. Our excellent programs thus far have been well attended. Our 1985 annual Christmas party was so joyous we hated to go home! Our beautiful museums are offering many fascinating relics of the past: so much to see and learn about.

Two of our programs this year were "standing room only". One of these was held at the hundred year old Brown House at Dixon in October hosted by Director Sadye Peterson who at first told me it was "hopeless". But then her family said, "go for it Grandmother" and she did just that. The other was the Waterman house in Fairfield hosted by Director Donna Marie Girton. Once again the faithful "cleaning crew" took over to make it possible to present a program and a tour of the historic house. We have learned from this. More programs will be held in historical houses around the county, as this seems to be popular with our members and guests.

The annual Pioneer Day outdoor program comes around late in September. It will be held at the Rockville Stone Church. These happy occasions have been taking place on the same site

since 1962. This is the day set aside to honor early pioneers and their descendents. Always a day to enjoy... we look forward to sharing it with our members.

A special thanks to committee people who worked so hard to make this a successful year. It is a pleasure to work with so many dedicated and caring people.

Mary Higham President 1985-1987

### About Our Authors

M.C. Low is librarian at Solano Community College and a historian on the side. He is researching the history of early Green Valley and Suisun Valley. His interest in Chief Solano comes in part because the college campus is located on the former Suisun Rancho.

Thomas Lucy is a repeat contributor to the *Solano Historian*. He is in charge of the photographic collection and the artifacts at Vallejo Naval and Historical Museum. His historic interest centers around early Vallejo.

Ernest Wichels is Solano County's best known historian. He has coauthored two books with Sue Lemmon

(Continued on page 13)

### This issue is dedicated to Anne Bennett Wichels

One of the most beloved members of the Solano **County Historical Society** passed away on April 30 at her home. She was among the first members of the Society and certainly one of its most cherished members. The wife of Ernest Wichels, Solano County's unofficial historian, Anne was always at his side and often shared honors with him as he was recognized for his significan contribution to the Navy and to local history.

She was gracious and thoughtful as she hosted or co-hosted scores of the Society's Board of Directors meetings, including the recent April meeting. The Solano community will miss Anne's charm and wit, her beauty and graciousness.



### Solano's Lost Treasure

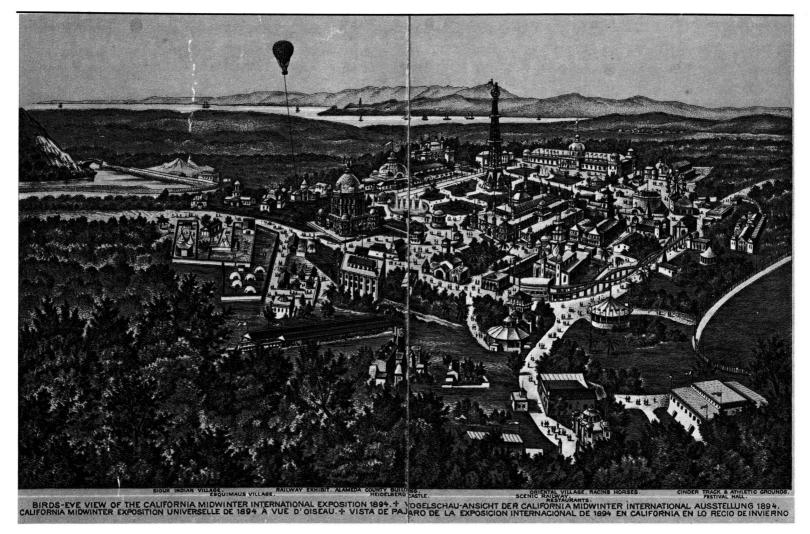
On January 27, 1894, seventy thousand people gathered at the formal opening of San Francisco's Midwinter Exposition. The winter opening dramatized California's wonderful climate and year around productivity. People came from as far as Europe to attend. Fully \$1,000,000 had been invested in magnificent buildings and in concessional features.

To stimulate interest in California's agriculture, the *Examiner* offered a truly magnificent trophy to the county with the best display of produce. This trophy, a large gold cup of beautiful design and workmanship, was manufactured by George C. Shreve & Co. at a cost of \$5,000. Its gold content alone would bring \$78,000 on today's market. Its final ownership was to be determined by popular vote, the county receiving the most votes to be the winner.

The cup was described to be of solid gold, embellished with precious stones. On the stem, in relief, were draped flags, the Bear Flag and the Stars and Stripes, their colors being brought out in enamel work. Above the flags and forming a band around the cup, were four medallions, showing the Fine Arts, Manufactures and Liberal Arts, Mechanic Arts, and the Agricultural and Horticultural Buildings. The four ornate arms, or handles, sprang from a band bearing the inscription, "California Midwinter International Exposition." On the opposite side from the inscription of the purpose for which the trophy was given was the Great Seal of the State of California. Above the goddess the motto "Eureka" was set in diamonds, emeralds, and sapphires and the stars in the field above were formed of single diamonds. The cover was a half globe in two colors of gold, surmounted by a golden grizzly bear. The eyes of the bear, like the eyes of the bears' heads on the central girdle, were flashing rubies.

The citizens of Solano were determined that Solano should win the cup. After a year of preparation, their exhibit was ready. The Vacaville Reporter described the opening exhibit in this fashion. "Solano County made a fine impression in the appearance of its varied exhibits. Old "Chief Solano", carved out of wood and clad in dried fruits, stood on the stump of a forty-two year old Solano County fig tree, grown without irrigation and raised a menacing tomahawk covered with prunes. Near him were a pyramid of large size of dried fruits and pyramidal shelving with dried fruits neatly displayed. The Chief also gazed at a large almond and nut exhibit made by A.T. Hatch and near this was a large pyramid of jellies contributed by the ladies of Solano County.

"The county citrus display covered the roof and walls of a representation 11 x 16 feet in dimensions of the old court house at Benicia, the first state capitol building. There were 10,000



An artist's rendition of the San Francisco Midwinter Fair of 1894, the fair where Solano won the great gold cup.

oranges displayed on this structure and it made a great show. At night the interior will be lighted and as the windows have colored glass the effect will be pleasing. C.F. Wyer, county commissioner and manager, worked until late to get the display in shape and to make the name "Solano" stand out in lemons on the orange thatched roof. It was a striking advertisement for the land where citrus fruit are grown to perfection."

The Vacaville Reporter on February 3 in commenting on the friendly rivalry that existed noted that some counties had tried to equal in size Solano's dried peaches and apricots by running theirs through a wringer. On March 10, it reported that Yolo, Napa and many other counties were supplying Solano with votes and even in Sacramento, a county which had entered the race-to-win, Solano had many friends.

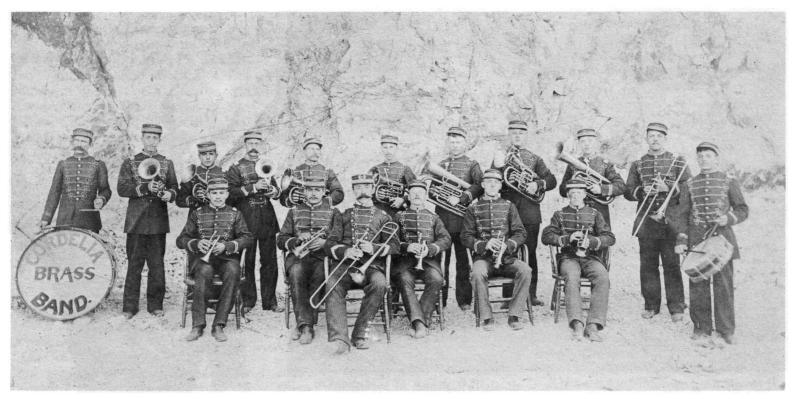
By May the contest had narrowed to Alameda and Solano. The *Oakland Enquirer* accused that a wealthy former resident of Solano living in Oakland was buying votes in Alameda for Solano. He even tried to take out an announcement in the *Examiner* that he was paying the highest price for votes. It did not mention him by name as that would only advertise and



View west across Vaca Valley, until 1880 all a wheat field.



Fruit drying in Suisun Valley illustrates early method of preserving Solano's fruit.



Identified member of the Cordelia Band are left to right, back row: No. 1, Billy Capell (base drummer), No. 5, Larry Higinson, No. 9, Henry Siebe, No. 10, Peter Siebe, Jr., front fow: No. 3, Julius Glasshoff (leader), No. 4, Chris Dunbar, No. 5, Henry Meyer, No. 7, Frenchie Collins (snare drummer).

extend the traffic. The Vacaville Reporter indignantly countered that the accusations against Senator Buck were false. It was well known that the superior merits of Solano's exhibit had enlisted the public in her favor, thus compelling Alameda, through Senator Dennison, to buy votes. Solano would win the cup, not buy it.

But on May 26 the Vacaville Reporter freely conceded both sides were buying votes, even buying votes already stamped for the other side and then restamping for their side. The Reporter continued that such things were fair in war, and it would never have complained or whined had Solano been defeated. But now that Alameda sees ignominious defeat in her face, she cries fraud. The Reporter denied the claim that Solano had bribed the official vote counter for the Examiner.

When voting closed in July, Solano was declared victor with 889,226 votes. Alameda was second with 628,490. Sacramento was third with 154,972. The second and third place counties also received handsome cups.

Admission to the expositon was 50 cents. On one day, St. Patrick's day, the rate was lowered to 25 cents with the St. Patrick's committee paying a bonus to the exposition management.

Although 70,000 people then attended,

concessionaires pointed out that they had made a great deal more money from the 35,000 who came on Washington's Birthday. They liked the 50-cent crowd better.

This convinced the management to maintain the 50-cent admission charge. However, February 23, the grounds were opened free to all the children in the public schools of San Francisco. Then on March 31, they were opened free to the children of all parochial schools of San Francisco and neighboring cities and towns, the inmates of all orphan homes, all children who worked for a living, and school children from every part of California for whom arrangements could be made for transportation to the fair.

On August 25, Solano was presented with the great gold cup. The ceremony took place in Suisun. The forenoon was devoted to games and contests. At 1:30 a procession assembled in front of the bank and the great cup was escorted to the N.S.G.W. Hall. There Mr. Frank H. Buck told of how the cup was won and Hon. Judge A.J. Buckles responded to the subject, "The County's Representative Resources." After an overture by the Cordelia brass band, Miss Ulstine of Dixon sang a solo. Miss Sadie Lewis read an original poem composed by W. Blythe of Suisun. Master Ed Frizell of Dixon sang a song to the tune of "Marching Through Georgia" that celebrated Solano's win. One line of the song was "She (Alameda) now says we bought votes, but when did she begin?" After various prizes were awarded, the program concluded with a solo by Miss Rose Lee Harrison, followed by music by the Rio Vista band.

One of the features of the procession was the presence of the "horrible horribles" and their float labeled "Alameda," which consisted of a few boxes of decayed fruit and a dilapidated wagon propelled by a scare-crow horse and a long-eared mule.

The grand event for the day ended with a grand ball at the N.S.G.W. Hall which lasted until 5 o'clock the next morning.

Earlier, to a suggestion that Vallejo might claim the cup, the *Vacaville Reporter* had replied "What would Vallejo say, think you, if in a voting contest in which a trophy was offered for the county having the best Navy Yard, and won by Solano, Vacaville was to set up a claim to the prize because she did her duty in enabling her county to win it. I fancy her very first exclamation would be 'What cheek!'

Vacaville did not get the cup. It was returned to San Francisco to be a part of the California State Board of Trade Exhibit. But in 1902 the Board of Supervisors became aware that the Board of Trade, considering the cup to



The Ferry Building where the cup was on exhibit from 1903 to 1910.

be too great a temptation to burglars, had stored the cup in the Union Trust Company's vaults instead of placing it on display. When it was taken out to be photographed for the Bee's special edition, it was discovered that the storage cost had run up to \$150 and the Board of Trade had no funds to pay for this. The Board of Supervisors settled the bill by paying \$75 to the Union Trust Company. The Board also purchased a safe for the cup and authorized the cup to be exhibited.

In June of 1903 the Vacaville Reporter displayed a large picture of the cup captioned "The jeweled gold cup, offered by the San Francisco Examiner to the BEST county in the State and awarded to Solano County by popular vote, is now on exhibition at the State Board of Trade, Ferry Building, San Francisco. Visitors are always welcome there and also to Solano County, the prize-winnig county of California.'

Then on a Wednesday afternoon in February, 1910, the cup disappeared forever. For seven years the cup had reposed inside the steel safe in the rooms of the California Develpment Board in the Ferry Building. At night it was protected by heavy steel doors, but in the daytime the doors were opened and a thick glass protected it from covetous hands.

Miss Powers, an assistant to the secretary of the board, discovered the loss of the cup about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. As she passed the safe in

which it rested she was startled to find the heavy plate glass that protected it missing.

She became excited and her cry of surprise attracted the attention of visitors. An investigation followed, but no trace of the valuable cup could be found.

The police were instantly notified and detectives hurried to the Ferry Building to look for clues. All they found were fingerprints left by the person who removed the glass. These were photographed. The cup has never been found.

Undoubtedly the gems were removed and the fabulous gold trophy melted down by the culprits who stole it, but one can never be certain that it is not in some attic or even some far off trophy room where no Solano eyes have seen it.





We respectfully thank the following for use of photographs:

Vallejo Naval and Historical Museum Solano Community College **Solano Historical Society Camel Barn Museum** Vacaville Heritage Council Mare Island Naval Shipyard Mrs. Ellie Mullen



Bronze statue of Sem Yeto, later Chief Solano, made by William Gordan Huff in 1934, first erected at Cordelia, then moved to downtown Fairfield for protection against vandalism.

### **CHIEF SOLANO**

### The Legend Examined

by M. C. Low

If a traveller had come west on the old Sacramento highway some four miles past Fairfield, county seat of Solano County, California, on the Sunday afternoon of June 3, 1934, he would have happened upon a most unusual ceremony attended by some 3,000 persons gathered around a great twelve foot high bronze statue set on a knoll overlooking the verdant orchards of Suisun Valley. The statue was that of an Indian chief, nude except for loincloth and three eagle feathers in his hair, parted in the middle in long tresses. He had classic Greek proportions and his hand was "upraised in a gesture of friendliness with the white settlers." At the base was a plaque inscribed as follows:

### Francisco Solano (Sem Yeto)

Chief of the Suisun Indians, friend of the white man.

"To the bravery and in particular to the diplomacy of that great chieftain of the Suisun Indians, civilization is indebted for the conquest of the territory which today composes the counties of Solano, Napa, Sonoma and Lake."

General Mariano G. Vallejo

The statue was the work of William Gordon Huff of Berkeley and was executed and erected at a cost of \$5,000 appropriated by the State of California supplemented by a gift of \$500 from the Massasoit Tribe of Red Men of Fairfield. Present to dedicate this statue were state legislators, the editor of the *Oakland Tribune*, Joseph Knowland, and a gathering of Massosoit sachems and members in Indian costume, which gave a touch of the early pioneer days when the famous Indian chief ruled the Suisun tribe of Indians. There was a "Parade of Tribes and Councils in costume" led by the Wahoo Drum Corps of Concord, an invocation by a Franciscan priest, and a rendition of Cadman's "The Waters of Minnetonka."

At the unveiling of the statue the daughter-in-law of the pioneer American settler, Samuel Martin, read a personal account of his meeting Chief Solano in the spring of 1850 when he first arrived in Suisun Valley. Related was how Martin and party camped by the "Indian village," with its "braves and squaws." There the chief was suffering from pneumonia. When he died that year, Martin helped bury him near an old buckeye tree in the tribal burial ground. Mr. Martin "often said that he found the Indian Chief Solano to be a highly intelligent person — a man of about forty years of age and of a most commanding appearance and of a cordial and friendly nature."

Clearly the account presents a picture of a noble red man, a noble savage — Rousseau's "natural man," unspoiled by corrupting vices of society. Such as Theodora Kroeber's Ishi of the Yahi tribe. In addition there is the specification of a noble chieftain, leader, and defender of his people, virtuous in altruism, self-sacrifice, and bravery. Americans had known these qualities in the great Indian chiefs of the eastern woodlands, the great plains, and the southwest, such as Massasoit of the Wampanoags of seventeenth century New England, Joseph Brant of the Iroquois, and Tecumseh of the

Shawnee of the revolutionary and the early republic periods, Quanah Parker of the Comanche, and Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce in the 1870's; Red Cloud and Sitting Bull of the Sioux, and finally Cochise and Geronimo of the Apaches in the 1880's.

Implicit in these records in addition to personal character is the existence of a freely living native people whose well being and survival as a nation were the purpose and challenge of leadership on the part of each Indian chief.<sup>3</sup> Was this ever the case with Chief Solano? An examination of the historical records does not support this traditional belief. Instead, if anything, the role of Solano was that of a native or aboriginal auxiliary in the military force of the conquering European invader, whose contribution was to advance the defeat and destruction of the Indian nation. Solano's record resembles that of the Indian scouts and auxiliaries of Spanish, Mexican, and American expeditionary forces more that that of a true chieftain of his people.<sup>4</sup>

Another view of the American Indians is the traditional Christian view that they were depraved, heathen savages. The English and Americans regarded them as bestial and unredeemable, to be displaced or destroyed. With some exceptions, such as in missionary enterprise among the Delawares and the Cherokees, the American view was expressed in relentless expropriation, displacement, and destruction in the sweep of American westward movement. The Spanish American view was that they were depraved, but could be redeemed by enslavement and forced conversion. The Spanish missionary program in effect from the 1500's to 1833 brought this policy to California and swept Chief Solano - then Sem Yeto - into its maelstrom. Did Chief Solano represent any qualities of the bestial savage in his treatment of other Indians? The record shows that he did. Did he assimilate the Spanish Mexican contempt for his own culture? This is unclear, but very possibly so.

The "conventional wisdom" of the popular tradition as transmitted in secondary California historical writings<sup>5</sup> has perpetuated the first — and I believe false — view — that of the Noble Red Man and a Brave Chieftain of a freely existing tribe of Indians commemorated so glowingly on that June day in the year 1934. That was exactly a full century from the very same month in the year 1834, when Solano first joined forces with — was it enlisted in? — the military program of the newly assigned military commander of the North Bay area, Captain Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. It is from the fanciful, exaggerated and perhaps self-serving accounts of "General" Vallejo that this view of Chief Solano derives. It is very probable that Vallejo first anointed him with the title "Chief" and the hyperbole, "Great Chief." It was Vallejo who proposed to the California legislature that name, Solano, be given in his honor to the present county of Solano when it was established on February 28, 1950.

The romantic picture of Chief Solano as a leader of an aboriginal tribe or tribes who made an alliance with Vallejo to maintain peace and further the advance of civilization is a distorted one. Spanish documents and historical writings of Vallejo and his relative and contemporary Juan B. Alvarado record the total destruction of the main Suisun Indian village in 1817 by a Spanish punitive expedition, with a massacure of the population. According to Alvarado, Sem Yeto was captured in this raid and taken off to Mission San Jose. He would have been a youth of sixteen years if the year 1801 given by Platon Vallejo (Mariano Vallejo's son) for Solano's birth is correct.

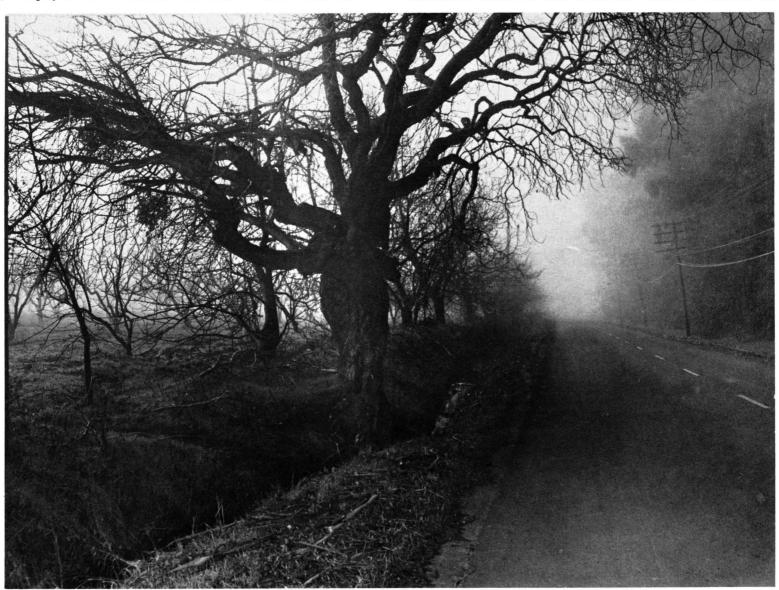
The next historical record of Sem Yeto is his appearance in the baptismal record of Mission San Francisco Solano at Sonoma in 1824, the second year since the founding of this last of the Spanish missions in 1823. There are two Indians listed as receiving the identical name Francisco Solano, one Vallimele, the other Quelloy on successive days. Vallimele is cited as being Sem Yeto and Quelloy, his brother.8

The presence of Sem Yeto as a new convert was representative of the experience of the southern Patwin Indians (Suisuns and their neighboring tribelets) between the years 1807 and 1834 during which they were forcibly removed for baptism and confinement at the three nearest missions — Mission Dolores (in present San Francisco), Mission San Jose (in present Fremont) and Mission Solano (in present Sonoma). A total of 4,000 southern Patwins are listed in the baptismal registers out of the pre-mission population estimated at 5,000 individuals. Only those living north of Putah Creek were able to continue to live in freedom. When Father Altimira visited the Suisun Valley in 1823 in his search for the best site for founding the last mission he found the area deserted of population, with only thirty Indians left in the Vaca Valley area and some fifty at Putah Creek.

The first report on the whereabouts and activity of Francisco Solano since his baptism in 1824 as a mission Indian ("Neophyte" is the church term used for these converts —

literally a "new plant") is found in the deposition in the Suisun Rancho land grant claim case by Cayetano Juarez, an ex-soldier and present grantee, who stated that "he had known him since 1827 when Solano was living at Sonoma, and [that] he had seen him at Suisun in 1832."11 It should be noted that a branch mission farm or "rancho" called Santa Eulalia had been established at Suisun before the end of 1824, with a house for the padre's visit, a corral for horses, and with a neophyte in charge. M.G. Vallejo states in his deposition in the same file that "He first saw Solano in 1829 at Mission Dolores [in present San Francisco] where Solano was employed tending cattle." Solano went over to [the] Sonoma [mission] in 1830 and resided there and in the Suisun Valley thereafter. He supervised the mission Indians in agricultural operations until secularization [of the mission system] in 1835, after which time he went to the Suisun Rancho to live. In 1837 I gave Solano a provisional grant of Suisun Rancho, in which year he built three or four adobe houses, one for dwelling and the others for barns and storehouses . . . Solano [also] had an adobe house in Sonoma."12

George Yount, an American living in Sonoma at the time, adds the further details that Solano had been in the employ of the mission as an overseer of the Indian laborers, a number of whom he took with him when he went to the



The old buckeye tree on Suisun Valley Road near Rockville in lower Suisun Valley, near which Chief Solano died and was buried in 1850. The tree is no longer standing. Photo taken by Rodney Rulofson in 1960's.

Suisun Rancho to live in 1836. There he built two adobe houses and cultivated the land. Salvador Vallejo, Mariano's brother, surveyed Solano's rancho for him in 1842 and sketched a crude map, called a "diseno" in Spanish, in order to meet Mexican statutory requirements for legal ownership. His deposition in this file fills in more descriptive details in the picture of Solano's life as a Mexican "ranchero" on the Suisun Rancho. "There were two or three adobe houses at the time when I gave [juridical] possession to Solano [January 1842]. There were two at the spring and a large one a little further off, which appeared to be a store house. . . There fifteen to twenty other houses made with poles stuck in the ground, plastered with mud and thatched with tule and brushes. . . Solano's house was at the spring near the road leading from Sonoma through Suscol." 13

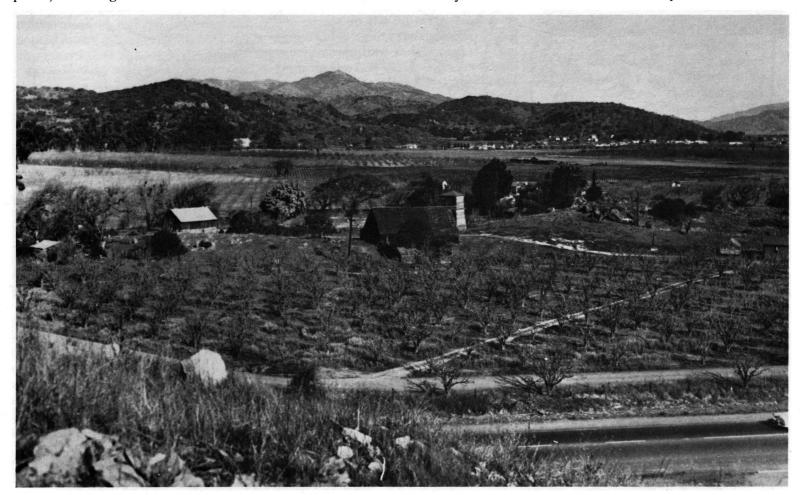
The very site described can be seen in the photograph of the Suisun Valley accompanying this article. It is just behind the large light-colored stone house on the left side of the valley. It is called 'Stonedene" and sits across Rockville Road from Solano Community College. Solano's one hundred acres of farmed land is now occupied by the College campus.

A final citation from this file of depositions, that of Jose de la Rosa, secretary to Vallejo, reveals the completely acculturated nature of Solano's life in the 1830's and 1840's: "I knew Solano well. . . He was a captain in the regular army of Mexico. . . He partook of the sacraments, was married by a priest, was a legal voter. . . I observed him vote." <sup>14</sup>

In May of 1842 Solano sold his interest in the Suisun Rancho to Mariano Vallejo and stayed permanently at Sonoma until the Bear Flag events of June of 1846, after which Solano disappeared from white society until 1850 when Samuel Martin and his party of American pioneers came upon him at Suisun Rancho succumbing to a final illness. The Rancho operation had been continued by Vallejo using ex-mission Indian laborers under an Indian overseer, Jesus Molino, whom Martin mentions. The remanent Indian population has been estimated at one hundred souls.

Martin and his fellow settlers could not have known the true story of Solano and the Indian experience. He heard, no doubt, the tales of his sway and power originating from the poetic pens of Mariano and his son, Platon, <sup>15</sup> and transmitted them innocently to later generations, who assimilated the Solano story to that of the great chiefs of American history.

But what credence should be given to the claim of Solano's military power and prowess still presented by serious students? Consider the statement in a master's thesis of 1976 describing Solano as "the Chief of the Suisun Indians in the 1820's, was a powerful warrior by the Indian name of Sum-Yet-Ho (Mighty Arm) who ruled over approximately forty thousand Indians in an area encompassing the present-day cities of Sonoma, Napa, Vallejo, Benicia, Cordelia, Fairfield and Rio Vista..." In the same passage the writer states that he opposed Vallejo's colonization program until defeated at Suscol [in 1835], whereupon he agreed to ally himself with Vallejo. The author then cites Vallejo's account of his



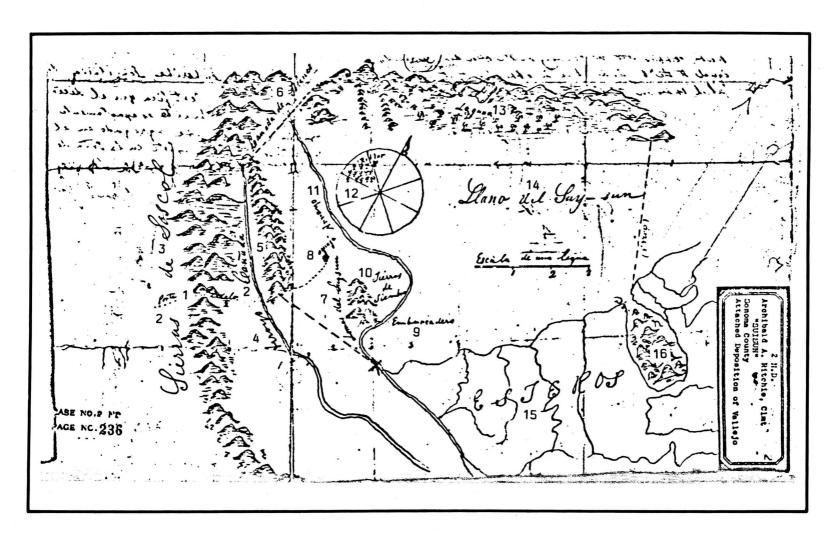
View of lower Suisun Valley looking north over the site of Chief Solano's hereditary village site and later the Santa Eulalia mission farm which Chief Solano acquired as the Suisun Rancho Grant in 1837. The large stone house against the hill on the left was built by Samuel Martin and stands in front of the adobe house that Chief Solano built in 1837. The field in the center is the location of Chief Solano's cultivated area and is now occupied by Solano Community College. Photo taken by Rodney Rulofson in 1960's.

landing on the banks of the Sonoma estuary in 1834 en route to founding the new town at Sonoma, when he was met by "Chief" Solano with 3,000 friendly, i.e., christianized, Indian warriers, after which they were joined by 11,000 wild Indians convened for a powwow and treaties of peace.<sup>17</sup>

Besides the contradictory implications of the last two statements, there are in the literature critical reviews of Vallejo's claims by reputable historians. Hubert H. Bancroft regards the latter account as grossly exaggerated because it contradicts the fact of a ten year rule of the Indians under the mission. It makes no mention of that history. Becorge Tays, writing in the California Historical Society Quarterly, cautions that "It must be remembered that Vallejo wrote his recollections of early events on which this portion of the story of his life and the history of Sonoma

are based some forty years after their occurrence. To this fact may be attributed many minor errors and some exaggerations."19

Exaggerations aside, Solano did play an important role in Vallejo's military and economic activity as commander of the northern frontier of Mexican settlement. It was the role essentially of a junior commanding officer of Vallejo's Indian scouts and auxiliaries in punitive campaigns from 1834 to 1843 against unsubdued, hostile and other marauding "wild" Indians to the north and east of the Sonoma settlement. Vallejo commissioned him a captain in the Mexican army in 1836 and "repaid Solano by showing him honors in every possible way, so as to strengthen the latter's power among his Indians. One of his methods was to present Solano with a guard of honor of forty-four Suisun and



The above map of Suisun Rancho is a hand-drawn copy of the original diseno made by Salvador Vallejo some time between 1837 and 1842 for Francisco Solano's grant application. The original is no more detailed or accurate, as it was done on horseback using a lariate as a measure. The dotted line traces the road from Sonoma through present Rockville Corners to the Suisun Valley. The following place names and terms appear on the original at the numbered spots on the map.

- 1. Puerta Zuela = pass (literally "little door")
- 2. Carretera = road
- 3. Sierras del Suscol = mountains of Suscol
- 4. Aroyo = stream (present Green Valley Creek)
- 5. Canada = ravine
- 6. Canada de Tolenes = ravine of Tolenes
- 7. Tomas de Suy Sun = hills of Suisun
- 8. Aquaje = watering place (Solano's house location at present Rockville Corners)
- 9. Embarcadero = landing (present Cordelia Green Valley Creek)
- 10. Tierras de Siembre = Corn fields (literally "sown land")
- 11. Aroyo de Tolenes = stream of Tolenes (present Suisun Creek)
- 12. Roblar = oaks (likely present Willota Oaks)
- 13. Laguna = small lake (present Lagoon Valley pond)
- 14. Llano del Suy Sun = land (or plain) of the Suisun Indians
- 15. Esteros = salt marshes
- 16. Portrero = pasture land

Napajo Indians. . . all bedecked in full uniforms. .. Chief Solano was given a fine horse with silver mounted trappings, a silver watch and fancy riding boots. The presentation was made at a full-dress parade, after which Solano made a speech to his men asking them to capture Zampay [a rival leader of the Yolotoy Patwins] in payment for Vallejo's kindness. In the battles of the following year this guard did fine service, losing only two of its members." Vallejo composed the following poem for the occasion:

Viva El Capitan Solano
Let the angels and seraphs insure in heaven
While endlessly blessing
Compliments in your commemoration
And since your birthday is such a triumph
The heavenly angels
say with human exuberance
Long live Captain Solano
For centuries and forever!

Your friends who are present in this garrison congratulate you on this, the day of your Saint.<sup>21</sup>

The above free translation is by Pedro Hiort-Lorenzen.

A vivid example of Solano's contribution to Vallejo's military campaigns and his help in forcibly conscripting Indian labor for the Mexican ranchos is conveyed by the following account of an early American settler, Charles Brown (1814-1883) who arrived in San Francisco in 1829 and was at Sonoma in 1835. It also provides an answer to the question of whether Solano could be viewed equally as a "depraved bestial and unredeemable savage", rather than the conventional portrait of the "noble Indian chieftain." Brown relates his eyewitness account as follows: "We started from Sonoma about the fall of 1835 under Lt. Vallejo and his brother Salvador Vallejo with about 60 armed Californians and Mexicans, 22 foreigners, among them myself, and some 200 Indian auxiliaries...[We] went some 200 miles away from Sonoma toward Oregon. . . We were out nearly three weeks. . Those Indians had been committing depredations in the vicinity and stealing stock of Sonoma and the expedition started to chastise them...[We] got to the rancheria [Indian village] about sunset and attacked the Indians... killed a great many [200-300] and took a large number of prisoners [100]. The worst thing I ever saw in my life was done then by Solano, the head Indian of Vallejo. There was a woman of the rancheria who had a child slung on her back and was far advanced in pregnancy. Solano first lanced the child on the back and then lanced the woman, ripping the belly open and pulling the phoetas [sic] out. The villainy of the act so maddened me that I was at the point of shooting Solano when Lt. Vallejo stopped me, saying that Solano was his best friend. As it was I was fortunate in not having killed Solano, for he, at a later hour saved my life when I was badly wounded... The fight lasted about one hour and a half. The rancheria was taken and sacked of everything of any value that the Indians had. . . I presume there must have been between 200-300 Indians slaughtered in that rancheria. They were killed in fair fight for they fought desperately. I did not see one killed after surrendering. . . I believe there were about 64 or 65 bucks taken prisoner, besides a number of women and children—the total number brought to Sonoma about 100... the prisoners were divided among the different ranches of the mission and put to work at the different trades. The young women were put in the monjerio [women's quarters] and the children were taken care of — Padro Quijas was then in charge of the mission—just about that time the secularization had begun.

"I never took part again in any expedition to fight Indians, except to pursue raiders who had stolen and run off stock, which happened very often till as late as 1848. On such occasions a few Indians were killed."<sup>22</sup> Chief Solano, on the other hand, took part in a dozen more similar campaigns!

A further implication of Solano's barbaric nature and his role in enslavement of Indian labor is revealed in the statement by the last survivor of his several wives, named Isidora:<sup>23</sup> "I prevented him from killing them (the captives of Vallejo's Indian campaigns) as was customary by tying them to trees and shooting them with arrows. I said to him 'turn them loose with Vallejo who will make them work the land.' "<sup>24</sup>

And work them, Vallejo did! "It was by [Solano's] assistance that [Vallejo] had command of all the (Indian) laborers he needed for the vast improvements he introduced in Sonoma and Petaluma. The General was a large grower of wheat at his hacienda, Petaluma. He employed several hundred men to plow, sow and harrow the vast fields he had under cultivation. These laborers were trained in the art of plowing and sowing at the missions with the padres as instructors. The General also employed uncivilized Indians. known as 'gentiles,' as assistant plowmen and harvesters."25 In addition there were several hundreds of ranch hands employed in his cattle, hide and tallow operations on the Suscol and Petaluma ranchos. "There were fifty-six [Indian] servants working all the time in the house — Servant for each of fourteen children. Each Indian was taught to do one thing and do it well. Five or six Indians washed clothes every day. Several did nothing but grind corn. . Other servants did nothing but make tortillas...'We give the Indians all the food they need, too,' says Dona Francisca. [Vallejo's wife] 'We give them no pay. If they are sick, we care for them. We treat them as our friends." "26

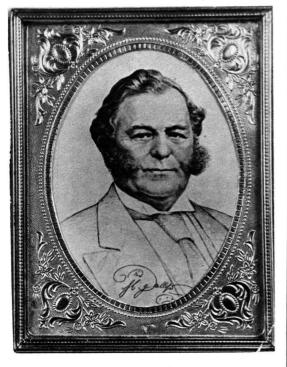
Further evidence of Solano's contempt for even the friendly or "domesticated" Indian population, as contrasted with the hostile or "wild" Indians against which the punitive raids were carried out, is found in his participation in the Indian slave trade during the summer of 1838 when numbers of Indian men and children were being forcibly kidnapped from several tribes in the Santa Rosa area and sold south of the San Francisco Bay. Arrested by Vallejo on October 6, 1838, as being one of the traders, he was tried in military court where he admitted his guilt and was imprisoned until he agreed to disclose the names of his Mexican confederates and help restore the children to their homes. Convinced by Vallejo that he had done a great injury to Vallejo's reputation, and perhaps harm to his own people, he made the following remarkable offer to Vallejo: "I am the owner of many grain fields. My cattle number more than two thousand. I count Sotiyomi [Wappo] children by the dozen, and if the Commandant wishes to take them from me as punishment, I will tell my people it is as it should be."27

A final disproof of the legendary status of Solano as an altruistic protector of his people is the record of his acquisition and disposal of the 17,752 square mile portion of the "land of the Suisuns," called the Suisun Rancho. Under the regulations issued by Governor Jose Figuero in 1834 for the secularization of the missions (Vallejo was appointed "Civil

Commissioner" to carry it out at Mission Solano) one-half of the land, equipment and livestock of the mission was to be distributed to the Indian exneophytes. Instead of fulfilling this goal, Vallejo and Solano arranged to award the Suisun Grant to Solano, alone, "for his own personal benefit and that of his family" on January 18, 1837, and not to the Suisun tribe! It was officially confirmed on January 21, 1942.

On May 10 of the same year (1842), Solano conveyed the lands to Vallejo for \$1,000, paid in coin and supplies. The remnant of the Suisun tribe which had been returned to the Rancho to farm it under the padres and then under Solano, consisting of at least one hundred or more souls, continued to work under the farm manager employed by Vallejo, an Indian named Jesus Molino. On August 26, 1850, Val-

lejo sold the Suisun Rancho to the American Archibald A. Ritchie for \$50,000. The Suisun remnant, dispossessed of their home territory for the second time, disappeared from history without a trace. Tradition has it that they migrated to the northern wilds. It is more likely that they disappeared as workers on one of the Mexican ranchos in Napa Valley which were in need of Indian labor at that time.<sup>28</sup>



General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo



Chief Solano portrait on the banner of the Association of Solano Pioneers founded in Suisun City in 1882. The face was created from sketches of the Chief done by those who had known him according to George Gellispie, recording secretary of the Association. The original banner has been lost.

### Letter Home

In the Fall of 1954, a Vallejo couple who are long-time members of the Solano County Historical Society noticed a *Vallejo Times-Herald* classified ad reading, "For sale, houseful of antiques. . .". Thinking it might prove interesting, they followed the address to a late nineteenth century cottage close to the Vallejo waterfront. Walking through the front door was like stepping back in time sixty or more years. The house had belonged to an elderly, reclusive spinster and apparently little had been changed since the house had first been occupied—from the horsehair-covered parlor furniture to the Edison phonograph that played cylinder records.

They soon discovered that there was a catch to this treasure trove. You could not buy individual items but had to submit a sealed bid for the contents of the whole house. After a hasty consultation, they submitted a bid, and before nightfall received a call from the attorney representing the estate that it was all theirs for \$355.00.

Their next problem was getting everything out of the house, but that is another story. In the process of cleaning out, they came upon an old cigar box tucked away in the bottom of a walnut chest of drawers. In the cigar box they found the original deed to the property signed by General John J. Frisbie, a brass powder horn still full of black powder, and an old letter written in pencil on rough tablet paper. The letter, which follows, stirs the imagination. How did it get to this location? How long was the journey? Who was Robert Atchison? What was the ship doing at Pirates Cove? Did he have a safe voyage and return home? What was life like on board the schooner *Otter?* Here it is—

Sch Otter Sauciletto Mar 2nd 89

Dear Mother

We left the city in a hurry and I didn't expect I would have time to write to you but we came over to Sauciletto to get the men Sobered up and get things fixed for a Sea trip. We will go out tomorrow and go direct north. We have a fine crew. Our cook is a fine fiddler so the time will pass Pleasantly. Well I hope you will all be well when I come home again. I met the Gibbons in the city and talked to them a few minutes. Frank did not get to go with us. When we got down the crew was all Shipped and the vessel waiting for me to come. Well when you write to me Direct letter to Pirate Cove Alaska. Write about every 2 months. I will write every chance I get but I am afraid it wont be often but don't worry as I will be all Right. Take good care of yourself and don't worry to much. Well tomorrow will see us off so good by and God bless you all till I return. Good by from your loving Son.

P.S. Direct letter — Robt Atchison
Sch Otter, Pirate Cove Alaska.
Care H. Liebes & Co.
111-113 Montgomery St.
San Francisco.

Bob

### A Mint in the Wilderness

by Matthew Fountain and Ernest Wichels

Early in 1895 Vallejo shopkeepers were aware that spurious quarters, half dollars, and dollars were being scattered in all directions. A local paper commented that when this money came into the hands of Vallejoites who were sportively inclined they worked it off in Temple's crap game. It remained for John W. Cavanaugh to land the counterfeiter behind bars.

Cavanaugh and his brother were proprieters of a saloon near the north Vallejo depot. On a Saturday afternoon his place of business was visited by an Italian known as John Montifino who ordered drinks for himself and Cavanaugh and offered a quarter in payment.

When Cavanaugh picked up the coin he discovered it was false. In the meantime his brother had left the saloon and was outside attending to private matters.

Montifino loudly insisted the money was good, and saying he would bet on it, placed five genuine dollars on the counter. Cavanaugh covered the bet, cut the quarter with his knife to show it was bogus, and took possession of the money on the counter. When Montifino strenuously objected, Cavanaugh told him he was under arrest and began to march him off to the officers of the law.

On the way Montifino suddenly turned on him and showed fight. Cavanaugh promptly staggered him with a right-hander under the jaw, and then felled him with a blow between the eyes. Cavanaugh then drew a pistol and with the assistance of a near-by resident bound him with rope.

Justice Lamont set Montifino's bail at \$10,000, which Montifino could not give. Montifino, later identified as Giovanni Montelbano with various spellings, was taken to San Francisco.

Newspaper reports of the capture of Montifino stated his headquarters were supposed to be in the Cordelia area. This set the people of this community to thinking and talking about who he might be. Charles Hench recalled seeing a man in a dugout on the side of the hill that rose back of the home of Mr. McIntyre on the edge of Suisun Valley. He had notified officers of Suisun of the man's apparently

crazy action, but they had taken no notice of the matter. The Logan boys had also seen him. Constable Kinlock was informed and he secured the assistance of Under Sheriff Robinson.

They went out to the area of the sightings and found a barn and dwelling house, old adobe ruins, and a campsite that contained evidence linking them to Montifino. The next day they continued the search, this time assisted by Charles Hench and others. With Hench leading the way, they discovered the underground workshop of the counterfeiter, and a remarkable workshop it turned out to be.

The best description of it is contained in a two-column story appearing in the San Francisco Weekly Examiner, dated February 28, 1895. This story deals with the general subject that "the Pacific Coast is the home of counterfeiters. In the past ten years more cunning bands of manufacturers of spurious coin have been arrested here than in other parts of the Union combined."

It is an uncanny story of the manufacture of bogus coins in a cave four miles northwest of Fairfield, in a "lonely spot in the rugged foothills. The entrance to which was so cunningly closed by the sod that there were no external evidences of its existence."

The Weekly Examiner said: "The most mysterious hiding place of counterfeiters ever discovered by Government officers was unearthed last week by Assistant Secret Service Agent Dudley Harris, who explored it and captured many coins and the ingenious

instruments used in their production."

The agent added: "It was the workshop of Giavanno Montelbano, who is now awaiting trial in the Alameda County jail, and who is about ready to confess and tell the story of his long career of successful crimes.

"He has made and circulated more counterfeits of silver dollars, dimes, and quarters in the past five years than any other ten operators combined."

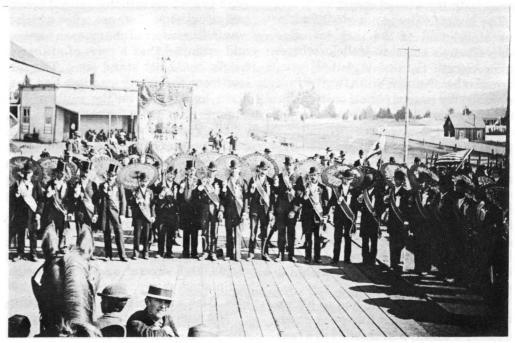
The coins were reported as perfect specimens, with a true ring.

After describing the cave northwest of Fairfield, the *Weekly Examiner* adds: "Within that odd subterranean chamber, it was his habit to work industriously at night, the cavern walls being thickly studded with tallow candles. The only ears save his own which ever heard the strange sounds he made in their manufacture were those of the coyote and other wild animals which infest these lonely regions.

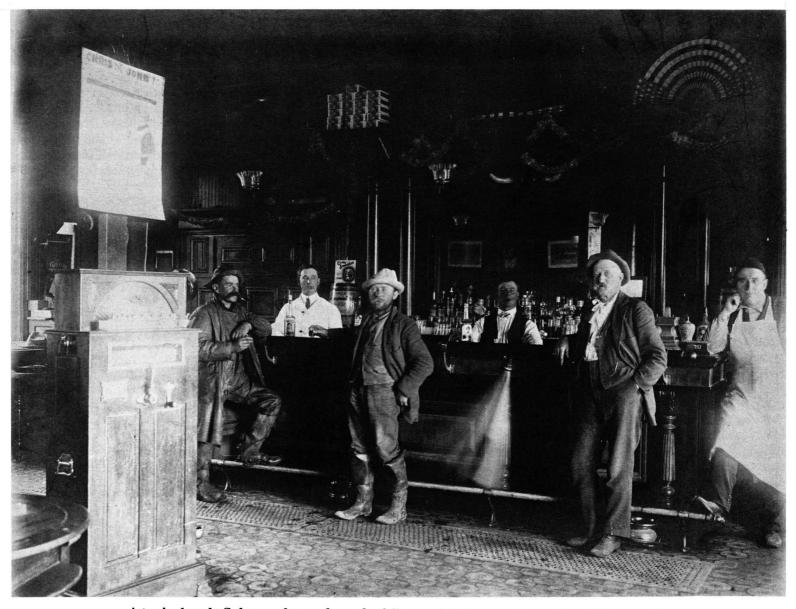
"Removing his shoes before entering or leaving the strange workplace, the thrifty manufacturer never left any telltale footprints.

The story indicated that it was the merest accident that his hiding place and workshop were discovered even after his arrest at Vallejo for passing a bad coin.

"A hunter once fired a shot in the vicinity of Montelbano's mountain hiding-place, and it so startled the counterfeiter that he lifted the sod covering of his cave and suddenly came forth as if from the bowels of the earth.



A celebration by Vallejo Native Sons in 1897 at North Vallejo railroad platform near Cavanaugh's saloon.



A typical early Solano saloon where the fellows might have gathered for a little gambling

"The hunter took flight and ran away with the utmost speed."

The hunter (who is not identified in the story) told of the incident after Montelbano's arrest in Vallejo, whereupon Secret Service Agent Harris, using the hunter's information, searched the rugged region until he discovered the mysterious retreat.

The secret service man's story is almost as weird as the subject itself.

"This cave is the oddest thing ever unearthed by the Government. It is situated about three and a half miles from Fairfield, in a side hill, and so located that one might pass by it and never suspect its existence. I have learned that some hunters had actually set their traps for wild animals within a few feet of the entrance.

"In order to enter it I had to lift up some sod after which I stepped down about four feet. I then crawled in about ten feet and came down to a second bench, which was the entrance to the counterfeiter's den proper. I had to bend over to get into this second bench and crawl some distance, after which I was in this infernal chamber so narrow and cramped that a man of ordinary height could not stand erect. The tallow from the many candles had run down in streams on the walls of the cavern.

"His furnace was made out of an empty powder can, and his chimney or flue was a long piece of well tubing, which, after running to the top of the hill through the earth, terminated some distance away in a heap of brush.

"There were many ladles, crucibles, pincers, and reeding (for the edges) machines; there were also broken molds and several sacks filled with unfinished dimes, quarters, and dollars. Also a complete polishing outfit.

"His supplies included quantities of antimony, bismuth, block tin and isinglass. Montelbano worked at night, and in the daytime slept in his house, a rude hut nearly two miles away.

The rest of the story is equally fascinating. It tells that the cave was fitted out about 1891, because Under Sheriff Robinson of Fairfield recalled seeing him frequently during that time. Once he went to a show in Fairfield and took all the boys in sight with him—paid for, of course, with counterfeit dimes.

It is typical that the San Francisco paper credited its own resident with the discovery of the workshop. The Solano Republican dated February 22, 1895, which told of the discovery as first related, contained these additional details. "The den awakened universal curiosity and received a constant rush of visitors throughout Saturday and Sunday. Everything that could be preserved as mementoes of the scene and the occasion were brought away. E.E. Long secured two loaves of bread that Montifino had purchased of John Miller just before the arrest. Another

man secured a razor, and another visitor carried away a pair of pincers. Sunday the Bailard boys discovered a small bag filled with dimes near where the other money had been found. There were about 200 of these dimes.

"Detective Harris came here last Monday and in company of Under Sheriff Robinson visited the scene of Montifino's operation."

Montifino was well-known to Harris as he had been caught in the act of passing counterfeit coins in San Francisco in 1884. He had attempted to stab the arresting officer. He forfeited bail and in 1890 the evidence against him was destroyed after it was believed he had gone to Italy and had there been killed.

While in jail awaiting trial on the Vallejo charge, Montifino managed to steal a fine, large chisel from carpenters making repairs. Shady Ryan, who was in jail, noticed Montifino's act and quietly informed Jailer Anderson, who promptly made a search and gained possession of the chisel.

The Vallejo Evening Chronicle of April 27, 1885, predicted Montifino's conviction in these words. "Since his incarceration in jail the prisoner has adopted many measures to lighten the punishment that he so richly deserves. It appears that his efforts have been futile. He engaged a lawyer to make out for him a certificate of good character but the job has been a most trying one on the part of Montifino's legal advisor and apparently the latter has given the contract up and proposes to get his man out of a most serious case in the speedest manner possible. That this is evident is only vouched for by the statement from the Bulletin that it is now thought that Montifino will plead guilty when he appears and he intends to ask the Court for mercy in judgement.

"If the facts in the case are squarely presented before Judge Morrow in the United States District Court the plea of mercy will have very little weight. It was the courage and pluck of Cavanaugh that alone saved him from being killed as Montifino is built of that material which means death to any person who crosses his path."

As predicted, Montifino did plead guilty and in doing so gained very little. United States District Judge Hawley, not Judge Morrow, sentenced Montifino to serve nine years and pay a fine of \$1,000. The maximum punishment for his crime was ten years and a \$5,000 fine.

### Plucky Miss Nellie Gannon

According to the Vallejo Evening Chronicle of July 14, 1895, James McGee, seventy years of age, awoke to discover the room next to his on the third floor of the Union Hotel was on fire. He attempted to raise the window to jump out but failed. In confusion, he grabbed his effects and even the bed-clothes and hastened down the stairs. A few steps before reaching the second floor landing he tripped, fell headlong and fractured his skull.

The fire made rapid progress and all the other roomers fled. In the meantime the commotion on the upper floor awakened those below and the confusion that followed is indescribable. It remained for a maid Miss Nellie Gannon, to prove the gallant firelassie, and while others were allowing the structure to burn around them, the young lady was battling heroically with flames, and to her presence of mind and excellent judgement the structures west from the Union Hotel were saved.

There were only pitchers of water in the rooms on the burning floor. With remarkable agility the firelassie seized one after another and dashed the contents on the fast burning mattress and burning walls. Finding this water supply exhausted she traveled three flights of stairs carrying receptacles of water and bravely brought the fire to a finish and remained victorious while those who lacked courage stood in the street shivering in the morning air.

Inspection of the room afterward showed it to be a general wreck, with the mattress completely ruined, one side of the wall partly burned away, and a portion of the floor matting in ashes. The saving of the ceiling covering, thin muslin lining, seemed to have provoked Miss Gannon to throw the water upward, and she had made such a good job of it from start to finish that those whose businesses were on the same block could thank her for her coolness exhibited single-handed and alone.

Miss Gannon then attended Mr. McGee until Dr. Carpenter arrived. Dr. Carpenter left at four in the morning with McGee resting easy. Dr. Carpenter was called back at nine and at ten McGee died.

That afternoon Coroner Trull summoned a jury that found that James McGee had died of purely accidental cause. The *Evening Chronicle* later

questioned this verdict upon talking with people who had seen McGee the day before his death carrying about \$400. No trace of it had been found. Also McGee had received two injuries to his head. The authorities were reported to be looking seriously into the possibility of foul play.



Cynthia Julia Frisbie, from an ambrotype made about 1863, when she would have been sixteen. Her composition and poem appear on the following page.

### About Our Authors

(Continued from inside front cover)

and has written the history column in the *Times Herald* for many years. His specialty is all-encompassing, Mare Island and Napa-Solano history.

Cynthia Frisbie was a member of the well-known pioneer family of Frisbie and the niece of John Frisbie, the founder of the city of Vallejo and sonin-law of General M.G. Vallejo. Young Cynthia attended Vallejo and Benicia schools and carefully saved her creative assignments.

Matthew Fountain is treasurer of Solano County Historical Society. He turned writer when he found historical anecdotes among the county's treasures.

Harold Wassmann is curator of the newest museum in Solano County, the Camel Barn Museum in the old Benicia Arsenal. He was also the mainstay in the obtaining and the remodeling of the museum.

### A Student's Dilemma

by Cynthia Julia Frisbie

The trials and tribulations of young students trying to complete school assignments seem no different from what they were approximately one hundred twenty-five years ago if one considers the efforts of eleven-year old Cynthia J. Frisbie, daughter of Edward Frisbie and niece of John, Levi and Eleazer Frisbie, prominent Vallejo pioneers. In a composition book, young Cynthia carefully copied dozens of her early assignments, some written while she attended Vallejo District School (1858-59) and other were while she was a student at Benicia Young Ladies Seminary (1862-63). One of her first assignments reveals a common frustration.

### "Composition Writing"

"How much trouble we do have in writing compositions. First our thoughts must be written down upon paper about the subject, whatever it may be, and then we have commenced, we have to stop and think a long time for something to write, and then, when it is finished, it may be that it is not very good, and we do not like to read it, but we have not time to write another, so we have to let it go and then we have to copy it off on another piece of paper. We get everything ready, but the paper we have forgotten; then we must jump up and get that; and then we commence writing, but my pen is bad and I cannot write well with it; then I get up and look for another, but I cannot find any, I have no more, so I must write with the one I have. Then when I go to write, the first thing, I leave out a letter in spelling one of the words, I place the letter above, and then proceed, but I get too much ink on my pen and drop it off on my paper, and there is a blot, but it is near the top of the page and so I can cut it off, but pretty soon I see another blot; I do not know how it got on, but there it is, and it can't be helped; so that piece of paper will not do, and I have to take another; but as I go get it, I look at the clock and it is almost school time, and I have to get ready and go to School and leave my Composition till another morning; the next morning I go at it, and I have better success than before. I get it copied; but the writing does not look well enough and I determine to write it over; but how can I write well without a good pen? I get somebody to lend me one and get it copied once more but when I hear my sister read her composition, it is so much better than mine, that I do not like to read it but I must, there is no help for that, but of course no one thinks mine is good by the side of her's, and I have made some mistakes with regard to the size of things which my teacher very kindly tells me of but some of my schoolmates who know more about it than myself laugh

at me and I feel very much ashamed. But after all the troubles and difficulties of writing compositions it is very useful in helping us to think, write, and be careful and attentive to what we are doing.

Cyntha J. Frisbie Vallejo Oct. 7th 1858 No. 8

My Composition is short, ... Though I hope it is good, As 'tis that and no more Above all that I would Greatly desire, And that I also may please
My kind teacher and friends,
And their fears may appeare
Which perhaps they may have
That I shall not Compose well. Vallejo Feb 4th 1859

Five months later the twelve-year old still had a problem in writing a satisfactory composition. After a few lines she abandoned the effort and wrote a couple of verses meant to flatter her teacher and to excuse herself. Then to make the whole more attractive, she added a large butterfly cut-out, painted in bright water colors.

### The Six Minute Ferry

by Thomas Lucy

The Six Minute Ferry was incorporated on April 2, 1919, to provide a ferry system between Vallejo and Crockett and between Vallejo and Mare Island. The success of the company's operation during the years 1920 and 1921 was due to the excellent management of its board of directors, and its wreckage in early 1922 was due to the same board of directors. The Six Minute Ferry had its roots in two Mare Island organizations, the Solano Aquatic Club and the Association of Mare Island Employees (AMIE).

In 1909, the Vallejo-Mare Island Ferry Company held the franchise to carry passengers from Vallejo to Mare Island. A few Mare Island employees, claiming the fee to ride the company's boats exorbitant, decided to band together, build a boat, and convey themselves to work.<sup>2</sup>

A club, called the Solano Aquatic Club, was organized and incorporated on the 5th of October, 1909. The stated purpose of the club was to promote yachting, rowing and all other aquatic sports. In addition, it was to buy, build, or lease a building for a club house for the benefit of the members, to hold regattas, collect fees, and build, buy, or charter boats for the use of members only.<sup>3</sup>

It was claimed that as the boats were to provide transportation to Mare Island for club members only, they would not be in competition with the Mare Island Ferry company.<sup>4</sup>

The first Board of Directors was W.D. Walker, Q.M. Spenser, G. McLaughlin, John Harold and G.D. Dickey. It raised funds to build the gasoline launches *Progress* and *Success*, each capable of carrying 250 passengers.<sup>5</sup>

The Mare Island Ferry Company rushed into the courts and secured an injunction against the Solano Aquatic Club, restraining it from operating boats within a mile and one half of the Ferry Company Wharf.<sup>6</sup>

The Solano Aquatic Club then moved its terminal beyond the mile and one half limit and continued operation, backed by a riding membership of over 1400 Mare Island employees. The new terminal was at a lumber wharf in South Valleio.<sup>7</sup>

In 1912 the Solano Aquatic Club published a weekly newspaper to promote its interests called the *Mare Island Tribune*. At that time Forbes Brown and H. Van Valkenburg were president and financial secretary, respectively.

The business on the Mare Island Ferry dwindled to such an extent that it was forced to sell out to the Solano Aquatic Club, which was then incorporated as the Association of Mare Island Employees (AMIE) on March 25, 1914.8 The stated purpose of the association was to provide a ferry service between Vallejo and Mare Island.9

During World War I, the association realized tremendous profits from its Vallejo-Mare Island ferry. There was no causeway to Mare Island at that time. Looking at the Rodeo-Vallejo Auto Ferry Company's profitable operation, the association decided to operate an auto ferry from Morrow Cove (later the site of the California Maritime Academy) to Crockett.<sup>10</sup>

The Association of Mare Island Employees in February 1919 secured options for landing slips at Morrow Cove and Valona, near C & H, Crockett. The Board of Directors at that time were.<sup>11</sup>

Forbes Brown
Grant McLaughlin
H. W. Smith
Q. M. Spenser
O. G. Gordon
H. Stewart
C. V. Stewart
H. E. Burns
James Frederickson
C. A. Fitzgerald
Grant Luper

These directors would serve through the years of the Six Minute Ferry.

A new company was incorporated on April 2, 1919, which was called "Six Minute Ferry" because of the time to cross the Carquinez Straits.<sup>12</sup> The directorate of the new company included the entire membership of the



The gasoline launch Progress was capable of carrying 250 passengers.

Association of Mare Island Employees directorate and was increased to include Vallejo and Crockett businessmen. Capitol stock was divided into 4000 shares at \$50.00 per share. Stock was no longer restricted to Mare Island employees. Permanent officers of the Six Minute Ferry were: 4

President, Forbes Brown Vice President, J. P. Connors Secretary, C. V. Stewart Treasurer, Q. M. Spenser

On May 16, 1919, the Association of Mare Island Employees received \$50,000 from the Six Minute Ferry, making the separation complete. The Vallejo-Mare Island Ferry then became an operation of the Six Minute Ferry. 15

A paved road from Fifth Street in South Vallejo to Morrow Cove was required. Since the county had no money available, and the City of Vallejo was indisposed to tax property, the Six Minute Ferry agreed to pay for the cost of paving the road, about one mile in length.<sup>16</sup>

By July, 1919, the company had \$100,000 in cash, \$30,000 in pledged stock, and was pushing for another \$70,000. The money was needed to pur-

chase the ferryboat *San Jose* from the Key System and remodel it to carry autos, to build landing slips and to pave the road from Fifth Street to Morrow Cove.<sup>17</sup>

The Rodeo-Vallejo Auto Ferry Company fought back. It claimed that it had previous rights to the tidelands in and near Morrow Cove, so brought suit against the Six Minute Ferry in the Solano County Superior Court. 18 Judge O'Donnell decided in favor of the Six Minute Ferry because it had purchased land at Morrow Cove from A. and M. Dos Reis and that an owner of land abutting on water had the right in ingress and egress regardless of who owned the tidelands. 19

The Rodeo-Vallejo Auto Ferry Company then purchased the surplus destroyer *Farragut* at Mare Island. The engines, boilers, and auxiliaries were installed on a new ferryboat *Aven Hanford* which could carry 75 autos and make the round trip, South Vallejo to Rodeo in 40 minutes, including time to load and unload. Aven Hanford was the president of the Vallejo-Rodeo Auto Ferry Company.<sup>20</sup>

Service between Morrow Cove and Crockett commenced on February 15, 1920, and was an immediate success. The San Jose left Morrow Cove at 6 a.m. and every 30 minutes thereafter until 10:30 p.m. and left Crockett at 6:15 a.m. and every 30 minutes thereafter until 10:45 p.m.<sup>21</sup>

The Six Minute Ferry because of its shorter route and more frequent service soon took over much of the business of the Rodeo-Vallejo Auto Ferry Company.

Because of their successful operation on the Vallejo-Mare Island and Vallejo-Crockett routes, the company decided to expand, taking on the Southern Pacific, which operated ferry routes throughout the lower Bay.

New Articles of Incorporation were issued, dated October 18, 1920, with the

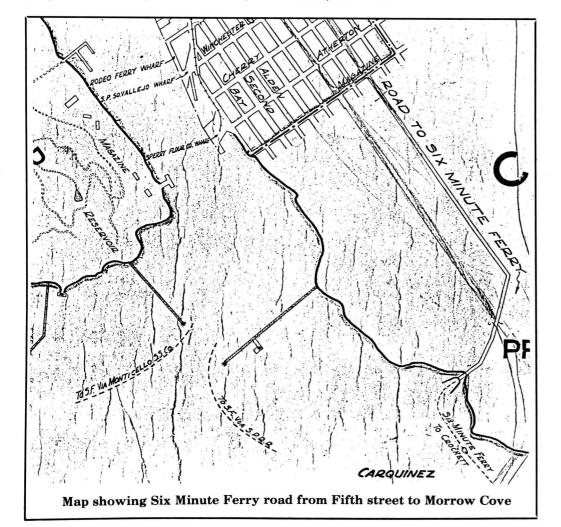
### OFFERED BETS ON COURT'S DECREE

Bets were freely offered this afternoon at the navy yard by men who
are friendly with the owners of the
Vallejo Ferry Co. that tomorrow in
Fairfield Judge Ellison will fine the
Solano Aquatic Club \$200 on each of
the contempt counts and \$500 in the
instance of the day following first
punishment of the club by a fine of
\$600.

It is curious that these same men who were offering bets at 2 to 1 today were also prophesying two weeks ago that Judge Ellison would fine the club \$200 a day, and he did so!

It will be an odd coincidence if Judge Ellison does fine the club \$200 for each day's violation of the injunction and \$500 for the last day of the running of the boats from the foot of Virginia street.

This item appeared in an issue of the *Mare island Tribune* published by The Solano Aquatic Club in 1912.



stated purpose to provide a ferry system between San Francisco and Oakland, San Francisco and Marin County, Oakland and Marin County, San Francisco and Contra Costa County, Contra Costa County and Marin County, Contra Costa and Solano County and between Vallejo and Mare Island. Priority was given to the Oakland San Francisco route.<sup>22</sup>

The new company was called "Six Minute Ferry Company." With capital of \$3,000,000, it was separate from the "Six Minute Ferry" operation across the Carquinez Straits and from Vallejo to Mare Island. Both companies had the same board of directors and would consolidate when the new company's lower Bay operations were completed.<sup>23</sup> Sale of the stock was handled by the New York and London Sales Company of San Francisco.<sup>24</sup>

On October 29, 1920, the City of Oakland granted the Six Minute Ferry Company a franchise to operate the ferry to San Francisco, which included a terminal at Seventh Steet in Oakland. At that time 50 percent of the stock of the Six Minute Ferry was transferred to the new Six Minute

Ferry Company. The original intent of the company was to build three new all-steel ferryboats designed to carry 80 autos on the Vallejo waterfront. The contract was finally given to Bethlehem Steel in San Francisco.<sup>25</sup>

A brochure issued by the company in January, 1921, listed the following assets:<sup>27</sup>, <sup>28</sup>

Ferry boat Vallejo, capacity 1,500 persons

Ferry boat San Jose, capacity 65 autos, 2,500 persons

Launch Success used as a tug boat Pile driving outfit — complete Clam shell dredger — complete Steam roller — 10 ton

Automobile trucks and passenger autos

Machine shop — complete Ferry slip, land, wharf and depot at foot of Georgia Street, Vallejo

Tract of land 60 ft wide with paved road over a mile in length extending from Fifth Street in South Vallejo to Morrow Cove

Twenty-three acres of land at Morrow Cove

Wharf, slip, ferry building, residence for employees and two and one-half acres of land adjacent to C & H, Crockett.

The net value of these properties was over \$400,000. In addition the company purchased machinery for the three new ferry boats.

During the period of February 15, 1920, to December 31, 1920, the San Jose transported 419,650 people, 142,688 autos and trucks, and 3,107 motorcycles across the Carquinez Straits.<sup>29</sup>

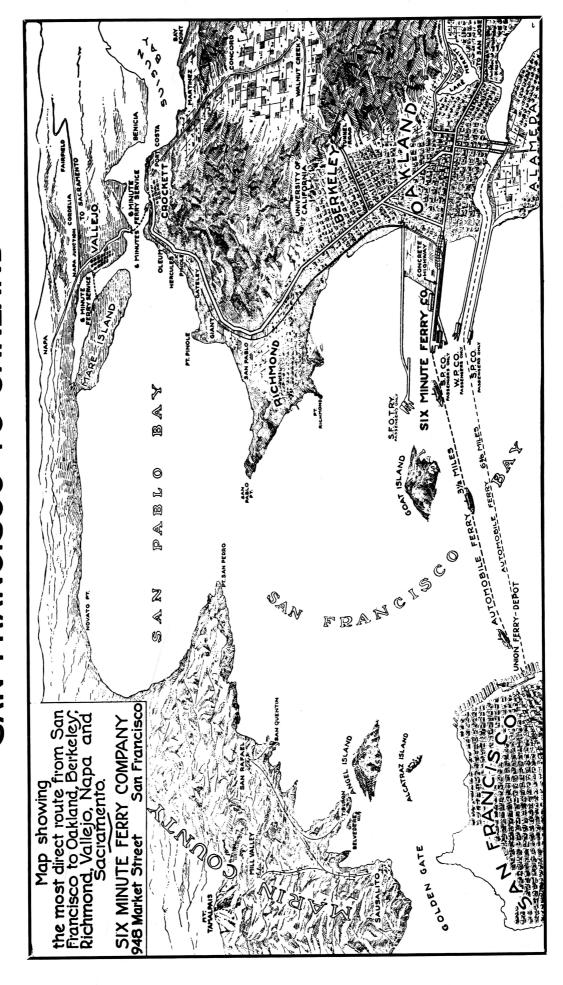
During August, 1921, the Six Minute Ferry decided to abandon its Crockett terminal, an area of frequent slides, in favor of a new terminal at Selby. The Rodeo-Vallejo Auto Ferry Company also stated that it would move its Rodeo terminal to Selby, provoking another clash between the two companies.<sup>30</sup>, <sup>31</sup>

On August 29, 1921, the Six Minute Ferry Company made an application to the State Board of Harbor Commissioners for a franchise for a slip at the Ferry Building in San Francisco. Meanwhile the Oakland City Council had reversed its decision to grant the Six Minute Ferry Company docking privileges at Seventh Street. The Six



The ferry *Vallejo*, which ran for many years between Vallejo and Mare Island, was operated by the Six Minute Ferry during the years 1920—1921.

# INUTE FERRY COMPANY SAN FRANCISCO TO OAKLAND SIX - WINUTE



## RELIABLE SERVICE SHORTEST ROUTE-

Minute Ferry Company claimed, however, that if it were granted the franchise at the Ferry building in San Francisco, Oakland would be bound by state law to grant the Seventh Street docking privilege. A state law specified that it was mandatory upon the holder of the ground on the east side of a stream to grant docking privilege, if a like concession has been previously granted by the holder of the west side holding.<sup>32</sup>

A stockbroker, Marcellus Krigbaum, asserted in a letter that the underground workings of the Southern Pacific were responsible for many obstacles confronting the Six Minute Ferry Company, making it impossible to be the company to proceed with its plans for a landing at the foot of Seventh Street in Oakland.<sup>33</sup>

It became obvious the Southern Pacific had tolerated the Six Minute Ferry operation across the Carquinez Straits but would not accept competition in the lower Bay.<sup>34</sup>

A decision was made by the Six Minute Ferry Company to accept only the Seventh Street location for its ferry terminal.35 On October 27, 1921, the Six Minute Ferry Company asked the Oakland City Commissioners to rescind their action in terminating the company's lease for Seventh Street, which had been previously granted. The original lease had been granted without a dissenting voice. Now the Oakland City Commissioners stated that the Six Minute Ferry Company could use land at the foot of Fourteenth Street, which would make the run to San Francisco a mile longer and require extensive dredging. The Six Minute Ferry Company refused the Fourteenth Street site and demanded the location at Seventh Street.36

On November 29, 1921, an offer was made by an unknown purchaser through Bethlehem Steel to purchase all holdings of the Six Minute Ferry company in the lower Bay at a net profit of \$200,000. Included were the three boats under construction. The suspected purchaser was Southern Pacific.<sup>37</sup>

On December 7, 1921, the California State Corporation Commission ordered a complete reorganization of the Six Minute Ferry company on action brought forward by the minority stockholders of the company.<sup>38</sup> The stockholders meeting in the Sciot's Hall in Vallejo voted to disapprove the sale of the company's lower Bay holdings and chastised the operation of the



Arthur Draughon, leader of the Six Minute Ferry Company Protective Association, president of the last board of directors, and mayor of Vallejo, 1923-1927.

company by the directors.<sup>39</sup> Later the directors voted to call a meeting of the stockholders to reconsider the sale of the lower Bay assets. The reason given was that in the previous meeting, the directors were criticized in open session, resulting in a reduction in sale of stock, so the company now had to sell.<sup>40</sup>

An editorial in a Vallejo newspaper stated that "The Fourteenth Street terminal was only a three minute longer run than to Seventh Street and that the wreckage of the Six Minute Ferry company was strewn upon the beach of avaricious ambitions of incompetent men who should have met Oakland half way.<sup>41</sup>

On January 27, 1922, the Six Minute Ferry Company's lower Bay holdings were sold. It received a check for \$450,000 from Mayor James Rolph of San Francisco, acting in behalf of the buyer. 42

On April 9, 1922, the stockholders meeting in Vallejo voted to sell the Six Minute Ferry's local routes to the Rodeo-Vallejo Auto Ferry Company for \$400,000. There was no opposition. The purchase included the Vallejo-Crockett and Vallejo-Mare Island routes and properties. 43

On April 27, 1922, Arthur Draughon, the leader of the Six Minute Ferry Company Protective Association, brought legal action in Superior Court in Fairfield against the Six Minute Ferry Company charging that:

(a) Approximately \$389,500 of capital stock and capital of the Cor-

portion were fraudulently appropriated by the Directors.

- (b) W. H. Morrissey, attorney for the Corporation, received \$65,000 escrow stock and other directors received \$195,000 escrow stock illegally and fraudulently.
- (c) That the New York and London Sales Company was a fictitious organization conceived by Morrissey and that the agency retained \$100,000 in stock and an additional \$200,000 by fraud.
- (d) That Morrissey received \$9,500 fees illegally and fraudulently.
- (e) That stock in the company was given to individuals for no consideration.

The complaint was signed by A.H. Draughon, Elmer Cave, May Chappell, W.D. Pennycook, C.A. Prochet and M.E. Arner. Defendants were the Directors of the Six Minute Ferry Company and the Bank of Italy.<sup>44</sup>

On May 9, 1922, the Six Minute Ferry Company was incorporated and separated from the Rodeo-Vallejo Auto Ferry Company.<sup>45</sup>

In September, 1922, a "criminal audit" of the books of the Six Minute Ferry Company was begun by a representative of the Burns International Detective Agency.<sup>46</sup>

On November 15, 1922, legal action between the Six Minute Ferry Company and the Six Minute Ferry Protective Association was compromised. The old Board of Directors retired and a new board was elected. Member of the new board were:

> A.H. Draughon, President Mrs. May Chappell, Secretary C.A. Procht, Donald Munro, and A.H. Klatt, Directors.

Sixty-five thousand dollars was paid to the old directors in exchange for \$260,000 escrowed stock, and immediate steps were taken to liquidate the company. Payment of \$20.00 per share had been previously paid on the stock, and an additional \$25.00 per share was authorized at this time, bringing the total to \$45.00 on an original investment of \$50.00 per share.<sup>47</sup>

On April 24, 1923, the sum of \$3.60 per share more was paid to all stockholders, ending the existence of the company.<sup>48</sup>

There were no losers in the failure of the Six Minute Ferry. The Rodeo-Vallejo Auto Ferry Company survived the competition and had five prosperous years until the opening of the Carquinez Bridge in 1927. The Directors of the Rodeo-Vallejo Auto Ferry Company were invited to serve on the Board of Directors of the Golden Gate Ferry Company, which they accepted, with Aven Hanford selected president of the Company.<sup>49</sup> Aven Hanford, who previously formed the company which built the Antioch Bridge, the first of the great San Francisco Bay Bridges, founded the American Toll Bridge Company which later built the Carquinez Bridge.<sup>50</sup>

The directors of the Six Minute Ferry

Company received \$65,000, and the stockholders received most of their original investment in addition to excellent dividends. W.H. Morrissey, the attorney for the Six Minute Ferry company, became a U.S. Attorney. Arthur Draughon, president of the Six Minute Ferry Protective Association was elected mayor of Vallejo in 1923. A new city hall was built during his administration. The building is now the Vallejo Naval and Historical Museum.

### The Barns and The Camels

by Harold Wassmann

The "Barns"

While the California State Legislature was being hosted by the City of Benicia in its beautiful, two-story red brick capitol building, 1853-1854, the United States Ordnance Department constructed its first two permanent buildings in the Benicia Arsenal.

The Arsenal, established in 1851 by Brevet Captain Charles Pomeroy Stone, was growing steadily and the need for permanent structures, brick or stone, in which to store and secure military equipment was imperative.

As the Commanding Officer of the Arsenal, Captain Stone requested the Chief of Ordnance, in Washington, to provide him with eastern brick with which to build. It was his opinion that the local brick was inferior in quality and excessive in price to fulfill his building needs. To reduce the shipping cost of transporting the brick from the Atlantic Coast to the West, he suggested that the eastern brick be used as ballast aboard ships bound for the West Coast. His request was referred by the Chief of Ordnance to the Secretary of War.

An immediate appropriation was not forthcoming. A part of the reluctance was based upon the reservations land title. (General Vallejo's proprietorship to the property in the Soscol Grant, which included the government reservation, was being challenged.)

Further contacts by Captain Stone to his Headquarters explained the serious threat of fire to the military stores, including tons of explosive black powder, which were being stored in wooden structures surrounded by fields of dry grass in the drought of summer. — Still no appropriation for his permanent building material. — In this situation, which he regarded desperate, Captain Stone considered alternatives. — He decided to construct his building of native Benicia sandstone which was prominent throughout the city of Benicia, including the Benicia Arsenal.

His appeal to his Headquartes then, was to provide him with stone cutters and masons. Artisans in these trades were provided. Their heritage was French, Irish and Italian. In the year 1853, Benicia sandstone was withdrawn from the earth in the immediate area of the building site — the stone precisely cut, chiseled decoratively — and raised, block upon block, to form the first permanent building in the Benicia Arsenal.

This building and another, very similar in design, constructed in 1854, were built to serve as storehouses. The estimated cost of the first building is \$10,000, the second, \$12,000. Both buildings, still standing, in "good" to "excellent" condition, are two-story structures, 40 feet wide by 99 feet long with walls 2 feet thick.

Seven wide arched doorways across the length of the building on the ground floor were installed so that wagons could enter the building to onload or off-load military equipment. Each stone facing on the exterior has a border enclosing a chiseled design or pattern. The arched doorways are beautifully designed by the stonecutter, each arch with its prominent keystone. The two arched doorways on the second floor of each building have a keystone ornamented with the carved insignia of the Army Ordnance Department — the cannon ball surmounted by a flame.

In 1855, the third permanent structure was erected, and still stands in "excellent" condition. Costing approximately \$1,600, it is a much smaller, single story building 28 feet wide by 35 feet long and was built as an engine house. It is situated in the generous space between the two storehouses. It shared the same care and artistry of its two companions.

A unique feature of the engine house is the vast cistern constructed under the building. (Sufficient water supply for the Benicia Arsenal in its early years was a persistent problem.) This trio of buildings is extraordinary in strength and character, displaying the artistic talent and engineering capability of artisans which now meld into the tapestry of history.

### **The Camel**

In the year 1855 Jefferson Davis, as Secretary of War, recommended to Congress that it should appropriate funds to import camels to the United States to serve as a means of transportation in the effort to develop the



Sheila borrowed from Marine World.

southwest desert. It had long been conceded that the rigors of the desert were in excess of the capability of the horse and mule — their frequent need for food and water and their tendency to suffer from heat exhaustion and disease made them unsuitable for the task.

The need for a solution became more acute after the War with Mexico because the United States had acquired much more desert land. The challenge to develop the desert area of the United States had increased!

Davis' proposal in 1855 to import camels was not original with him, nor was it the first time he proposed this method of transportation. Indeed, many years before, the camel had been proposed as a solution to the transportation dilemma in the desert.

For the purpose of this narrative, it is sufficient to relate that at this 1855 proposal of Davis to Congress, \$30,000 was appropriated to import camels to the United States on an experimental basis to determine the ability of the camel to resolve this unique transportation problem.

The camels were purchased by the U.S. Government from the areas of Smyrna, Alexandria and Tunis. A total of 78 camels were purchased, all of which were one humped (dromedary) except one pair of two humped (bactrian). The camels were transported by ship to Indianola, Texas, and from Indianola were driven 200 miles to Camp Verde, Texas.

It was at Camp Verde that the first and only U.S. Camel Corps was born. The camel, the officers and the enlisted men had to get to know and understand one another. The officers and men learned some unpleasant personality traits of the camel — because of a language barrier, the opinion of the camel cannot be reported.

It was learned that the camel was odorous, he spat and he bit. The camel also upset other animals. Its odor and strange appearance caused the horses, mules and cattle to buck and stampede, certainly a negative point for those who were reporting the progress of the experiment.

On the positive side, however, the camel was able to carry much heavier loads than the horse and the mule for far greater distances without the frequent need for food and water and was not so susceptible to heat exhaustion and disease.



Unfortunately for the experiment, especially to the camel, the ominous clouds of civil war within the United States were impending. The experiment which would benefit the South was losing favor. The government began to sell camels to those who wanted them.

In 1863, while the Civil War was in progress, the Army decided to sell at public auction the remaining camels. The total number of camels was 35, all of which were located at various Army posts in southern California. The auction was to be held at the Benicia Arsenal.

### The Camel Barns

In January of 1864 the camels arrived at the Benicia Arsenal. The first two permanent buldings of the Benicia Arsenal were selected to house the camels.

The first floor of each building was vacated of military stores — the seven great doors of each of the two buildings were opened — an invitation for the

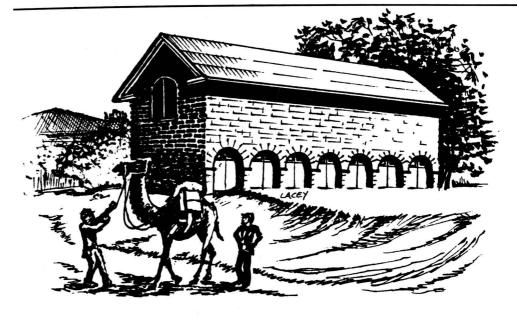
camels to shelter within — their exercise area was, conveniently, just outside the great doors.

On February 29, 1864, the auction was conducted and the entire herd of 35 camels was purchased by Mr. Samuel McLeneghan who had been a camel teamster in the employ of the U.S. Army. Mr. McLeneghan paid a total of \$1,495 for the camels.

As a result of this unique bit of U.S. Army history and the occupancy of the first two permanent storehouses in the Benicia Arsenal by camels for a period of a few weeks, the two storehouses and the little engine house between, have ever since been referred to as THE CAMEL BARNS. What happened to the camels?

Mr. McLeneghan sold some to farmers, miners and circuses. He held a camel race in Benicia for a charity benefit, and proceeded to Marysville and Sacramento where he held some camel races for his own benefit. Primarily, he occupied the animals in transporting salt from a salt mine in northern Nevada to a silver mine in the same area. In this enterprise he had engaged two other camel teamsters. This transportation job lasted about ten years. Upon its expiration, Mr. McLeneghan accepted a like transportation task in southern Nevada.

Enroute to the new job site Mr. McLeneghan died. The camel teamsters did not know what to do with the camels so they released them to roam free. For many years after, camels were sighted in the area. Many a drinking man gave up his bottle because he thought he saw a camel!



Artist's drawing of the completed storage building.

### Chief Solano — pp. 5 - 10

- 1. The Solano Republican, Fairfield, California, May 31 and June 4, 1934, p. 1.
- 2. Ibid., December 2, 1937, p.1
- Albert Britt, Great Indian Chiefs: A Study of Indian Leaders in the Two Hundred Year Struggle to Stop the White Advance (Freeport, N.Y.: Books For Libraries Press, 1969. First Published 1938)
   Thomas Dunlay, Wolves for the Blue Soldiers;
- Indian Scouts and Auxiliaries with the United States Army, 1860-90. (Lincoln Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1982).
- 5. In order of publication date the following are typical treatments in earlier secondary sources: "History of Solano County", Historical Atlas Map of Solano County (San Francisco, California: Thompson and West, 1878) p. 9; J.P. Munro-Fraser, History of Solano County (San Francisco, California: Wood Alley and Co., 1879) p. 60; Tom Gregory, History of Alley and Co., 1879) p. 00; 10m Gregory, History of Solano and Napa Counties (Los Angeles, California: Historic Record Co., 1912) pp. 17, 37. Later popularized versions include Eileen Minahan, "The Story of Chief Solano of the Suisun Indians," Fairfield, California: Superintendent of Schools, 1959) pp. 5-11; "Solano County History and Government" (Fairfield, California: Board of Supervisors, (1970), pp. 3,
- 6. The term "Yeto" in the alleged Indian name of Chief Solano raises a question of whether he was ever a hereditary or elected chief of any Indian assemblage. According to Alfred Kroeber, the renowned leader of California Indian anthropological research, there is a distinction between a war leader (yeto) and a chief (sektu): "The war leader was not an official, but a brave man, who could shoot true and official, but a brave man, who could shoot true and dodge well. . . He was called yeto; the chief, sektu. . . the chiefs did not fight and were not attacked." Alfred L. Kroeber "The Patwin and Their Neighbors," University of California Publications in Archaeology and Ethnology, Vol 29, No. 4, (February 27, 1932, p. 298. "Sem- means hand in Patwin language.
- 7. Provincial Record, Vol XII, p. 207, Archives of Cali-Provincial Record, Vol XII, p. 207, Archives of California, MS., Copies in Bancroft Library. Juan B. Alvarado, "Historia de California," MS., 1876, Vol. I, pp. 151—155, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Cited by Maria L. Lothrop, "Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Defender of the Northern Frontier of California," Ph. D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1927. Vallejo's account in the William of California MS. tr. 194497. is in his "Historia de California, MS., tr., I 94-97, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1875, Cited by Alice Cleaveland, "The North Bay Shore During the Spanish and Mexican Regimes," M.A. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1932. In a footnote Cleveland cites H.H. Bancroft, *History of California*, II, (San Francisco, California: A.L. Bancroft & Co. 1884-1890) p. 329 that both Alvarado and Vallejo, writing many years after the events, confused the true date of this raid, 1810, with that of another expedition by the leader, Gabriel Moraga made in 1817. If so Sem Yeto would have been captured at nine years of age
- 8. Mission San Francisco Solano, "Libros de Bautismos," MS., 3 Vol., pp. 56, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Cited by Marcus Peterson, "The Career of Solano, Chief of the Suisuns," M. A. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1957. H.H. Bancroft cites "Numa" and "Telog" as his Indian names. The two brothers were differentiated as Solano I and Solano II, which adds to the
- officulty of interpreting the record!

  9. R.H. Limbaugh and W.A. Payne, Vacaville: The Heritage of a California Community (Vacaville,
- California: Vacaville City Council, 1978) pp. 5-8.

  10. *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 13. Limbaugh and Payne conclude "The story of Spanish penetration and action in Solano County ... was the record of swift and destructive treatment of the native people. . . leaving the land empty of human occupation."
- 11. Depositions in Alexander A. Ritchie Claim File, Halleck, Peachy and Billings Papers, C-B421, Box 5, 1852, Bancroft Library, University of California,
- Berkeley.

  12. *Ibid.* Solano's Sonoma house was built in 1836. Solano likely spent most of his time between between 1835 and 1843 in Sonoma as a member of Vallejo's staff supervising Indian military auxiliares and conscripting Indian laborers for construction work in Vallejo's estblishment of the new "pueblo" in place of the Solano Mission and for building and working at Vallejo's extensive Petaluma Rancho. See below.
- 14. Ibid.
- 15. Platon Vallejo, "Memoirs of the Vallejos," 1914, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley
- Sister Mary Gene McNally, "Mariano Guadalupe's Relations with the Indians of California; Northern

- Frontier 1825-1842." M.S. thesis, Dominican College, San Rafael, California, 1976, pp. 74, 75. She cites Platon Vallejo's memoirs as her source!
- 17. Ibid., pp. 78, 79. she cites M.G. Vallejo, op. cit., p 12 as
- source of this report.

  18. Hubert H. Bancroft, op. cit., p 294, footnote, cited by Cleaveland, op. cit., p. 148. Bancroft, op. cit., p 360 describes Vallejo's report of his 1834 campaign against the Sotiyomi as "if not purely imaginary (at least) greatly exaggerated. Cited by Peterson, op. cit. p. 27 footnote.
- 19. George Tays, "Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo and
- George Tays, "Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo and Sonoma: A Biography and a History," California Historical Society Quarterly, Vol. 16, p. 244.
   George Tays, op. cit., p. 250.
   Mariano G. Vallejo. "Documentos para la Historia de California," (1815-1841) (Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley) Vol. 14, No. 95, p. 205.
- Charles E. Brown, "Statement of Recollections of Early Events in California," 1878, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, MS. (C-D53), pp. 12-15.
- 23. Munro-Fraser, History of Solano County (San Francisco, California: Wood, Alley & Co., 1879) on p 185 reports Solano as having had eleven wives. Platon Vallejo, "Notes," MS., n.d., File of photocopies in Chief Solano folder of Rodney Rulofson in the Vacaville Heritage Council library, Vacaville, California, gives the number as nine, of which "she was his favorite"
- Isidora ("Princess Solano"), "My Years with Chief Solano." Translation by Nellie V. Sanchez of dictated statement in "Sketches of California Pioneers," No. 12, MS., 1874. Bancroft Towering Topics, Vol. 22, No. 2, February, 1930, p. 39. Isidora relates that she had been abducted when a girl by Solano from a distant Patwin tribe, the Chuructos, then living on Cache Creek in present Yolo County. Her Indian name was "Chowi" (Red Bird) and she was given the name Isidora Filomena when baptized at the Sonoma mission. Despite Vallejo's grandilo-quent title of "princess' for Solano's last spouse, she and her three daughters worked as live-in maidservants in the Commandante's home. See Platon Vallejo, ibid; and Sister Mary Gene McNally, op. cit.,
- p. 92. William Heath Davis, Seventy-Five Years in California, Berkeley, California, Howell-North Books, 1967, p. 103.
- 26. Helen Bauer, California Rancho Days, State Dept. of Education, Sacramento, 1957. Vallejo, *History of California*, (tr.) p. 273. Cited by
- George Tays, op. cit. Vol. 16, p. 246.

  28. For documentation of this land grant history with a strong argument for collusion between Solano and Vallejo see Supreme Court of the United States, December Term, 1854, No. 44, the United States Appellant, v. Archibald A. Ritchie, Brief for the United States, Caleb Cushing, Attorney General. The brief is reproduced in Peterson, op. cit., pp. 78-80 and in Helen Matson Read, Lo, The Poor Indian, A Saga of the Suisun Indians of California-a Documentary Novel, pp. 477-479.

### Six Minute Ferry - pp. 15-20

- 1. Articles of Incorporation Six Minute Ferry, April
- 2, 1919. "Newspaper to Fight One Battle," *Technical World*,
- June 1913, p. 561, 562. Articles of Incorporation, Solano Aquatic Club,
- October 9, 1909. "Newspaper to Fight One Battle," op. cit., p 561, 562.
- Articles of Incorportion, Solano Aquatic Club, October 5, 1909.
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   Articles of Incorportion, Association of Mare Island Employees, March 26, 1914.
- Harlan, Geroge H. & Fisher, Clement, Of Walking Beams and Paddle Wheels, Bay Books Ltd., San Francisco, 1951, p. 123, 124.
- Vallejo Evening Chronicle, February 18, 1919.
- Articles of Incorportion, Six Minute Ferry, April 2,
- 13. Vallejo Evening Chronicle, March 26, 1919.
- 14. *Ibid.*, April 8, 1919. 15. *Ibid.*, May 16, 1919
- 16. *Ibid.*, May 23, 1919. 17. *Ibid.*, July 10, 1919.
- 18. Ibid., September 27, 1919.
- 19. *Ibid.*, October 2, 1919. 20. *Ibid.*, October 18, 1919.
- 21. Ibid., February 25, 1920.
- Ibid., Articles of Incorporation Six Minute Ferry Company, October 18, 1920.
- 23. Vallejo Times, October 19, 1920.
- 24. Hatch Brothers Papers.25. Vallejo Times, October 30, 1920.
- 26. Hatch Brothers Papers.
- 27. Vallejo Evening Chronicle, January 3, 1921.28. Hatch Brothers Papers.
- 29. Vallejo Evening Chronicle, January 15, 1921.

- 30. *Ibid.*, August 15, 1921. 31. *Ibid.*, October 15, 1921.
- 32. Ibid., August 29, 1921
- 33. Hatch Brothers Papers
- Harlan & Fisher, op. cit., p. 124.
   Vallejo Evening Chronicle, October 18, 1921.
   Ibid., October 27, 1921.
- 37. Ibid., November 29, 1921.
- 38. *Ibid.*, December 7, 1921. 39. *Ibid.*, December 12, 1921
- Ibid., December 28, 1921.
- 41. Hatch Brothers Papers.42. Vallejo Evening Chronicle, January 1922.
- 43. *Ibid.*, April 9, 1922. 44. *Ibid.*, April 27, 1922. 45. *Ibid.*, May 9, 1922.

- 46. *Ibid.*, September 25, 1922.
  47. *Ibid.*, November 15, 1922.
  48. *Ibid.*, April 24, 1923.
- 49. Harland & Fisher, op. cit., p. 124, 125.
- 50. Ibid., p. 127.

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